

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

25 JUNE 1971

STAT

- 13 -

II. COMMUNIST COUNTRIES

NORTH VIETNAM AND THE PRG

The initial Hanoi broadcast on 16 June told the North Vietnamese audience that the New York TIMES on the 13th carried excerpts from a Defense Department "secret report" which had been requested by former Defense Secretary McNamara. The broadcast said that the report of "40 volumes" contained evidence that the United States had begun to be involved in Indochina before the French withdrawal and that plans to bomb the North had been prepared about five months before the Gulf of Tonkin incident. It went on to report Senator McGovern's charge that the Pentagon study contains "proof" that President Johnson had deceived the American people and Congress, and to observe that the report has caused the Nixon Government "extreme embarrassment." It noted in conclusion that the Justice Department had asked the New York TIMES to stop publishing the report and return it to the Defense Department but that the newspaper rejected the request "in the interests of the American people."

A later Hanoi broadcast on the same day--in English to U.S. servicemen--reported that the TIMES had published the second installment of the article on the 14th. It said that "shocked by the disclosure," Senator Symington had called for a "full congressional investigation" into the war.

A Hanoi domestic service broadcast on the 17th noted some details of the report, observing that the United States had been waging a "secret war" against the DRV, and that 10 weeks before the Tonkin Gulf incident the Administration drafted a resolution for Congress to adopt "that would have authorized it to take any necessary measures, including the use of armed forces in South Vietnam." It also referred to the carrying out of commando raids in North Vietnam. Noting that the third part of the TIMES' series dealt with the introduction of "massive" U.S. troops into South Vietnam, the broadcast said that on 1 April 1965 the President decided to use U.S. troops in South Vietnam "because the U.S. Administration realized that bombings in North Vietnam could not prevent defeat in South Vietnam but the President ordered that this fact be kept secret."

The only available substantial account of Hanoi press attention to the Pentagon study is in a Hanoi English-language broadcast

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

25 JUNE 1971

- 14 -

to Southeast Asia on the 17th. It reported that NHAN DAN that day, "quoting the gist" of the Pentagon study, noted that the "truth expressed" in the document "shed more light on the U.S. imperialist policy of aggression and . . . exposed the truth on the futile allegations used by the U.S. authorities to white-wash the war." The paper said that "these odious actions" committed by the U.S. imperialists have been denounced long since by the Vietnamese people and that the publication of the study "helped the Americans and others in the world to see more clearly the U.S. imperialists' policy of barbaric aggression and its futile tricks concerning the Vietnam problem." The paper also reportedly said that U.S. public opinion "has been aroused to hot discussions" about the study. The VNA press reviews noted on five occasions that NHAN DAN and QUAN DOI NHAN DAN were carrying reports of the publication controversy--on 20 and 22 June and 18, 23 and 24 June respectively. But no details of these reports have been broadcast.

A Hanoi domestic service broadcast on the 18th observed that Congress had "reacted vigorously" to the Justice Department's attempts to prohibit the TIMES from continuing to publish the document. It noted that 62 Congressmen, mostly Democrats, had sent a letter of protest to Secretaries Mitchell and Laird and that they demanded that the Defense Department make copies of the classified document available to Congress. Another domestic broadcast on the 18th said that U.S. rulers "are bewildered and confused" by the publishing of the document and that according to the U.S. press FBI agents had begun an investigation on "why and where copies" of the documents were given to the New York TIMES. And it also noted "strong criticism" of the decision to force the TIMES to temporarily cease publication of the report, quoting such Senators as Church, McGovern, Mansfield and Kennedy in this regard.

Hanoi broadcasts on the 21st and 22d also cited congressional reaction; including Senator Fulbright's comment that the document's publication was in the national interest. Senator Muskie was quoted as saying that the Administration's prohibition on publishing the documents exemplifies the "serious credibility crisis" of 1971, and that "it is necessary to call former President Johnson to testify" before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

25 JUNE 1971

STAT

- 15 -

A Hanoi Vietnamese-language broadcast to the South on the 20th reported that on the 18th, the Washington POST had carried the first of a series of articles on the study. And a domestic broadcast on the same day acknowledged some of the substance of the POST article on U.S. attempts to prevent general elections in Vietnam in 1954. It also reported that the POST on the 19th printed documents which disclosed that the Johnson Administration's decision to temporarily stop the bombings of the DRV "was not aimed at having peaceful talks, but was aimed at appeasing public opinion and justifying the U.S. war escalation in Vietnam."

On the 22d, Hanoi said that, according to foreign sources, despite the fact that the "Nixon Administration has strangled the freedom of the press and banned the New York TIMES from continuing to publish" further Pentagon documents, "many papers in Washington and other cities have endeavored to exploit the excerpts of the reports published" in the TIMES. It added that "these papers have advanced new facts to lay bare the systematic U.S. policy of aggression while disclosing some facts in the last part of the report, which were banned from publication by the Nixon Administration, in order to expose Nixon's role" in the U.S. "aggression" in Indochina.

Liberation Radio's initial acknowledgment of the publication came in a Vietnamese-language broadcast on the 17th. Subsequently, the radio publicized the controversy mostly in its English-language broadcasts. However, a Vietnamese-language broadcast on the 22d noted that the U.S. press had continued to publish the Pentagon study despite the Administration's efforts to ban publication and noted that the Boston GLOBE was the third paper to publish portions of the document. Also on the 22d, Liberation Radio and LPA, in their reportage of the second Conference of the International Commission to Investigate U.S. War Crimes which opened in Oslo on the 20th, noted that the general secretary of the commission, Hans Goran Frank, claimed that the recent disclosure of the Pentagon's secret documents "had denounced in part the U.S. acts of war in Indochina."

Vietnamese communist media do not report references to the Pentagon study at the 17 June session of the Paris talks. PRG Foreign Minister Mme. Nguyen Thi Binh brought up the New York TIMES articles in the rebuttal period, but, consistent with standard practice, the VNA account does not report the details: VNA at the end of its account says cryptically that in the

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

25 JUNE 1971

STAT

- 16 -

rebuttal period Mme. Binh and Xuan Thuy "gave concrete evidences showing that the United States is the aggressor, and that the Nixon Administration is pursuing and expanding its war of aggression."

Also consistent with standard practice, Hanoi media do not publicize the post-session briefing at which PRG spokesman Duong Dinh Thao read Mme. Binh's additional remarks claiming that the secret Pentagon study published by the New York TIMES confirms an "obvious truth which we have pointed out at this conference--that the United States, in the scheme of establishing its neocolonialist domination in South Vietnam, has had plans to gradually provoke and widen the war of aggression."

DRV press spokesman Nguyen Thanh Le at his press briefing on the session indicated that some passages in Xuan Thuy's prepared statement apparently had been intended as an allusion to the controversy over the Pentagon study. Le reported that after Ambassador Bruce made his "additional remarks"--in which he responded to Mme. Binh's remarks on the New York TIMES publications by saying that there was no profit in debating the origins of the war--Xuan Thuy reread passages in his prepared statement that "from the beginning of this conference we have pointed out that the U.S. aggression over the past decades was the root and immediate cause of the present serious situation in Vietnam and Indochina . . ." and that "the Nixon Administration has done its best to deceive public opinion . . ." (These passages were not included in the VNA account of the session, however.)

When Le was asked whether he thought the Pentagon report as published by the New York TIMES proved U.S. violation of the Geneva agreements, he responded by observing that the delegation had copies for the reporters of a DRV White Book issued in 1965. In detailing the "stages" of U.S. intervention, Le said the fifth stage began with President Nixon's assumption of office; Le said that "Nixon has prolonged the aggression" and that in attempting to stop the New York TIMES from publishing the rest of the Pentagon report "he tried to conceal the fact that he has directly participated in and stepped up the war of aggression in Vietnam during the last decades."

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

CONFIDENTIAL

30 JUNE 1971

STAT

- 1 -

INDOCHINA

Hanoi caps its reports on the furor over publication of the Pentagon study on Vietnam with a full-page NHAN DAN commentary on 27 June entitled "The Most Obscene Dupery in History." The commentary says actions exposed in the documents should be condemned but asserts that it is more important that "odious acts" of the current Administration be denounced and stopped. NHAN DAN reiterates the view, conveyed in Hanoi's earlier reports, that the documents confirm long-standing Vietnamese charges about U.S. "aggression." The same point was made by the DRV and PRG delegates at Paris, and DRV delegate Xuan Thuy also scored the Nixon Administration for "pretending" to apply a new policy and trying to dissociate itself from the actions of its predecessors.

Moscow continues to charge that the present Administration is following the same "deceitful" policies revealed in the Pentagon documents. Comment speculating on the source of the "leak" includes a 26 June PRAVDA article by Yuriy Zhukov which elaborates the notion that the publication of the documents was master-minded by powerful U.S. financial circles.

The media of Moscow's East European allies have generally seconded the Soviet line that the Pentagon study confirms U.S. duplicity, although Romania's relatively restrained comment has avoided censure of present U.S. policy. Peking media still have not mentioned the Pentagon documents.

Hanoi reports the return to Paris on 24 June of Politburo member and "special adviser" to the talks Le Duc Tho after an absence of more than a year. The reports quote Tho's remarks on arrival but do not include his responses to reporters' questions.

A new NLHS proposal publicized in Pathet Lao and Hanoi media on 25 June calls for a U.S. bombing halt to be "included" in a cease-fire, modifying the 12 May NLHS peace plan's stipulation that the bombing halt must come first. The new proposal is contained in a letter from Souphanouvong to Souvanna Phouma, dated 22 June.

Vietnamese communist battle reports highlight fighting in Quang Tri just south of the demilitarized zone. The capture of Fire Base Fuller is hailed as an "outstanding armed exploit" which, along with other successes, has "shattered" the allied defense line along Highway 9.

DRV, PRG SEE PENTAGON STUDY AS SHOWING CONTINUITY OF POLICY

Hanoi's first press comment on the Pentagon study on Vietnam, the NHAN DAN commentary carried by VNA on 27 June, develops the companion themes that present U.S. policies are no more than an

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

30 JUNE 1971

STAT

- 2 -

extension of past ones and that President Nixon's present personal attitudes represent no more than a continuation of those he held in the past. A commentary and an article carried by Liberation Radio on the 27th press essentially the same themes, and a commentary broadcast by the Front radio the next day claims that the documents demonstrate the nefarious nature of the Saigon regime, past and present.

As reported by VNA, the NHAN DAN commentary observes that "it is wrong to say, as some people do, that Nixon has nothing to do with the U.S. aggressive policy" divulged in the documents. Mr. Nixon "showed himself to be a diehard warmonger" when he was vice president, it says, and "kept on supporting the war policy" of the Johnson Administration while he was out of office; since he became President, he "has never given up his aggressive policy but always sought to prolong the war with the 'Vietnamization' plan and 'Nixon Doctrine.'" While declaring that the "vile acts" of previous administrations which the study brings to light must be condemned, NHAN DAN says it is "far more necessary and urgent to denounce, condemn, and resolutely stop the odious acts of the current Nixon Administration aimed at fooling public opinion and thwarting the American people's interests."

Liberation Radio is similarly at pains to trace the President's position back to his tenure as vice president. Thus the Front article on the 27th says that in 1954 he "advocated sending U.S. troops to Dien Bien Phu and using tactical nuclear weapons against the Vietnamese people"; the Front commentary of the same date contains a similar reference to his 1954 views on tactical nuclear weapons. The article charges that the President has "visited South Vietnam on eight occasions to directly step up the war" and that he is continuing now to prolong and expand it and to deceive the American public.

Like earlier Hanoi propaganda, the NHAN DAN commentary observes that the conclusions the American press has drawn from the documents are "no novelty" to the Vietnamese people, whose own government has long been denouncing the U.S. Government's Vietnam policy and "its deceitful measures to cover its barbarous war crimes." NHAN DAN adds that the "two and a half million words" in the documents only reflect "part of the innumerable barbarous crimes" committed by the United States.

The Pentagon study, according to NHAN DAN, shows that one cause of U.S. "failure" in Vietnam was "the miscalculation about the

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

30 JUNE 1971

STAT

- 3 -

Vietnamese people's strength and resolve." The paper concluded by reiterating this resolve--shared by the Cambodian and Lao peoples--"to forge ahead on our triumphal path, to persist in and step up the fight until final victory is won."

Continuing daily reportage in Hanoi and Front media sustains its stress on U.S. reaction, chiefly from senators, to the airing of the study and to the court injunctions against further publication. Hanoi's reports portray a struggle on the issue between the Administration on the one hand and the press and some congressmen on the other hand, and they say the President "was forced to hand over" the study to Congress on 28 June. The reports also say that the President has asked the Supreme Court to bar publication of the study. British Government concern over the publication of the documents is mentioned in a 25 June Hanoi radio report which charges that the U.S. war escalation "as a whole has received strong backing" from the British Government, a cochairman of the 1954 Geneva conference.

Hanoi radio continued on 23 and 25-27 June to broadcast installments of Neil Sheehan's article which accompanied the New York TIMES' initial release of the documents, and the radio noted on the 25th that the army's QUAN DOI NHAN DAN began that day to carry "large excerpts" of the article.

PARIS TALKS Both PRG Foreign Minister Mme. Nguyen Thi Binh and DRV Minister Xuan Thuy, in their statements at the 24 June Paris session, argued that the Pentagon study confirmed that the origin and "direct cause" of the Vietnam war was U.S. "intervention and aggression" and scored the President for continuing and expanding the "aggression." But Mme. Binh devoted the bulk of her statement to denouncing the Vietnamization program, and the VNA and LPA accounts of the session ignore her remarks on the Pentagon study. They report only that she "severely condemned" the Administration for pursuing the war while "seeking by every means to deceive the American Congress and people." In her statement she said the documents only revealed "a part of the truth" of U.S. intervention in Vietnam and were "indisputable confirmation" of what "we have revealed for a long time, at the very first session of this conference."

The DRV's Xuan Thuy echoed and elaborated these sentiments in passages VNA did report. He scored the present Administration for "trying to avoid its responsibilities, pretending that it is

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

30 JUNE 1971

STAT

- 4 -

applying a 'new policy'" and contending that the policies of previous administrations "'belonged to history,' that the deception of the American people is a thing 'of the past.'" According to VNA, he said it is well known "that Mr. Nixon himself was directly concerned in the process of aggression and the war . . . during the past years." And he added that the current Nixon Administration "is more warlike and more deceptive toward the American people than any other previous administration."

As evidence of Administration deceit, Thuy went on to condemn "fraudulent allegations" that included talking about reduced involvement while escalating the war, talking about victory "while suffering defeat," and claiming that the other side is unwilling to negotiate while the United States itself is "hindering" the Paris talks.

VNA says the allied delegates' statements showed how the U.S. disclosure of the documents "has pushed the U.S. and puppets' delegation into a quandary." It adds that they "still perfidiously sought to distort history and obstinately clung to Nixon's five-point program, which has been refuted by the Vietnamese people." VNA's typical brush-off of Ambassador Bruce's remarks thus fails to acknowledge his comment, both in his statement and during the give-and-take portion of the session, that the United States seeks discussion on current issues, not the past. Also ignored are his remarks on the POW issue in which he noted recent broadcast messages purporting to be from U.S. military personnel captured in South Vietnam and sought identification and proper treatment of these men, as well as correspondence between them and their families.*

* The fact that correspondents at the post-session briefing questioned the communist spokesmen about the Ambassador's remarks on prisoners was of course also ignored in communist media, which as usual failed to publicize the briefing. The DRV and PRG press spokesmen sidestepped the questions with the standard formula that if a troop-withdrawal date is set, the question of prisoners of war will be rapidly settled.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

23 JUNE 1971

STAT

- 1 -

INDOCHINA

The publication in the New York TIMES, and other papers, of extracts from a secret 1968 Pentagon study on the history of U.S. involvement in the Vietnam war prompted only a modest volume of low-level propaganda from Hanoi and the Front. Revelations in the study and the appended U.S. documents are seen as confirmation of long-standing Vietnamese communist charges of U.S. deception about its "aggression" in Indochina. The media do not acknowledge that the subject came up at the 17 June Paris session or that the communists gave journalists copies of a DRV White Book on the war released in July 1965.

Moscow has devoted extensive attention to continuing developments in the controversy over publication of the Pentagon study. And, unlike Hanoi, both the radio and press carry signed articles. Moscow says that the government's concern over the publication stems from the fact that the Nixon Administration has pursued previous administrations' policies of "deception."

Extracts of the study carried by Moscow media include references to the effect of the Sino-Soviet split on U.S. policy. And some Mandarin-language radio commentaries use this as a peg to again charge that Peking's "splittist" policy harms the Vietnamese struggle. Peking media have not mentioned the publication of the Pentagon study.

The 15-19 June visit to North Vietnam by a Romanian delegation headed by party chief Ceausescu provided the occasion for VWP First Secretary Le Duan to repeat standard demands for U.S. withdrawal and to express Hanoi's determination to continue the struggle. Reflecting mutual concern, the joint communique on the visit pledged that the two sides will strive to contribute to the restoration and consolidation of solidarity in the socialist world. Hanoi's persistent plea for unity was reiterated forcefully in NHAN DAN's editorial on the 21st which said that increasing the solidarity and the might of the "socialist camp" is an "imperative demand."

There is no major Hanoi and Front comment on current military action in South Vietnam but propaganda routinely reviews alleged communist achievements in countering pacification and argues that the ARVN forces are seriously deteriorating in the wake of "defeats" in southern Laos and Cambodia.

DRV, FRONT REPORT FURORE OVER PUBLICATION OF PENTAGON STUDY

Vietnamese communist reaction to publication in the U.S. press of the Pentagon study on the Vietnam war is confined mainly to routine radio broadcasts which cite foreign sources in reporting developments

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

23 JUNE 1971

STAT

- 2 -

in the United States. Hanoi radio first mentioned the subject on the 16th and since then has broadcast items, both in English and Vietnamese, every day. And on the 22d a Hanoi Vietnamese-language broadcast carried extracts of Neil Sheehan's article which accompanied the first installment of documents. Both the party paper NHAN DAN and the army organ QUAN DOI NHAN DAN have carried reports of developments but there is no known press comment. The Front reacted on the 17th, the day after Hanoi, with both an LPA item and a Liberation Radio broadcast in Vietnamese. Subsequent Front attention, however, is confined largely to pickups of Hanoi items in Liberation Radio's English-language broadcasts.

The initial Hanoi broadcast told the North Vietnamese audience that the New York TIMES on 13 June carried excerpts from a Defense Department "secret report" which had been requested by former Defense Secretary McNamara. The broadcast said that the report of "40 volumes" contained evidence that the United States had begun to be involved in Indochina before the French withdrawal and that plans to bomb the North had been prepared about five months before the Gulf of Tonkin incident. It went on to report Senator McGovern's charge that the Pentagon study contains "proof" that President Johnson had deceived the American people and Congress, and to observe that the report has caused the Nixon Government "extreme embarrassment." It noted in conclusion that the Justice Department had asked the New York TIMES to stop publishing the report and return it to the Defense Department but that the newspaper rejected the request "in the interests of the American people."

A later Hanoi broadcast on the same day--in English to U.S. servicemen--reported that the TIMES had published the second installment of the article on the 14th. It said that "shocked by the disclosure," Senator Symington had called for a "full congressional investigation" into the war.

A Hanoi domestic service broadcast on the 17th noted some details of the report, observing that the United States had been waging a "secret war" against the DRV, and that 10 weeks before the Tonkin Gulf incident the Administration drafted a resolution for Congress to adopt "that would have authorized it to take any necessary measures, including the use of armed forces in South Vietnam." It also referred to the carrying out of commando raids in North Vietnam. Noting that the third part of the TIMES' series dealt with the introduction of

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

23 JUNE 1971

STAT

- 3 -

"massive" U.S. troops into South Vietnam, the broadcast said that on 1 April 1965 the President decided to use U.S. troops in South Vietnam "because the U.S. Administration realized that bombings in North Vietnam could not prevent defeat in South Vietnam but the President ordered that this fact be kept secret."

The only available substantial account of Hanoi press attention to the Pentagon study is in a Hanoi English-language broadcast to Southeast Asia on the 17th. It reported that NHAN DAN that day, "quoting the gist" of the Pentagon study, noted that the "truth expressed" in the document "shed more light on the U.S. imperialist policy of aggression and . . . exposed the truth on the futile allegations used by the U.S. authorities to white-wash the war." The paper said that "these odious actions" committed by the U.S. imperialists have been denounced long since by the Vietnamese people and that the publication of the study "helped the Americans and others in the world to see more clearly the U.S. imperialists' policy of barbaric aggression and its futile tricks concerning the Vietnam problem." The paper also reportedly said that U.S. public opinion "has been aroused to hot discussions" about the study. The VNA press reviews noted on four occasions that NHAN DAN and QUAN DOI NHAN DAN were carrying reports of the publication controversy--on 20 and 22 June and 18 and 23 June, respectively. But no details of these reports have been broadcast.

A Hanoi domestic service broadcast on the 18th observed that Congress had "reacted vigorously" to the Justice Department's attempts to prohibit the TIMES from continuing to publish the document. It noted that 62 Congressmen, mostly Democrats, had sent a letter of protest to Secretaries Mitchell and Laird and that they demanded that the Defense Department make copies of the classified document available to Congress. Another domestic broadcast on the 18th said that U.S. rulers "are bewildered and confused" by the publishing of the document and that according to the U.S. press FBI agents had begun an investigation on "why and where copies" of the documents were given to the New York TIMES. And it also noted "strong criticism" of the decision to force the TIMES to temporarily cease publication of the report, quoting such Senators as Church, McGovern, Mansfield and Kennedy in this regard.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

23 JUNE 1971

STAT

- 4 -

Hanoi broadcasts on the 21st and 22d also cited congressional reaction, including Senator Fulbright's comment that the document's publication was in the national interest. Senator Muskie was quoted as saying that the Administration's prohibition on publishing the documents exemplifies the "serious credibility crisis" of 1971, and that "it is necessary to call former President Johnson to testify" before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

A Hanoi Vietnamese-language broadcast to the South on the 20th reported that on the 18th, the Washington POST had carried the first of a series of articles on the study. And a domestic broadcast on the same day acknowledged some of the substance of the POST article on U.S. attempts to prevent general elections in Vietnam in 1954. It also reported that the POST on the 19th printed documents which disclosed that the Johnson Administration's decision to temporarily stop the bombings of the DRV "was not aimed at having peaceful talks, but was aimed at appeasing public opinion and justifying the U.S. war escalation in Vietnam."

On the 22d, Hanoi said that, according to foreign sources, despite the fact that the "Nixon Administration has strangled the freedom of the press and banned the New York TIMES from continuing to publish" further Pentagon documents, "many papers in Washington and other cities have endeavored to exploit the excerpts of the reports published" in the TIMES. It added that "these papers have advanced new facts to lay bare the systematic U.S. policy of aggression while disclosing some facts in the last part of the report, which were banned from publication by the Nixon Administration, in order to expose Nixon's role" in the U.S. "aggression" in Indochina.

Liberation Radio on the 22d, noting that the U.S. press has continued to publish the Pentagon study despite the Administration's efforts to ban publication, noted that the Boston GLOBE on 22 June was the third paper to publish portions of the document. Also on the 22d, Liberation Radio and LPA, in their reportage of the second Conference of the International Commission to Investigate U.S. War Crimes which opened in Oslo on the 20th, noted that the general secretary of the commission, Hans Goran Frank, claimed that the recent disclosure of the Pentagon's secret documents "had denounced in part the U.S. acts of war in Indochina."

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

23 JUNE 1971

STAT

- 5 -

REFERENCES TO PENTAGON STUDY AT PARIS IGNORED BY HANOI MEDIA

There was no explicit mention of the Pentagon papers by either of the communist delegates in their prepared statements at the 17 June session of the Paris talks. PRG Foreign Minister Mme. Nguyen Thi Binh did bring up the New York TIMES articles in the rebuttal period, but, consistent with standard practice, the VNA account does not report the details: VNA at the end of its account says cryptically that in the rebuttal period Mme. Binh and Xuan Thuy "gave concrete evidences showing that the United States is the aggressor, and that the Nixon Administration is pursuing and expanding its war of aggression."

Also consistent with standard practice, Hanoi media do not publicize the post-session briefing* at which PRG spokesman Duong Dinh Thao read Mme. Binh's additional remarks claiming that the secret Pentagon study published by the New York TIMES confirms an "obvious truth which we have pointed out at this conference--that the United States, in the scheme of establishing its neocolonialist domination in South Vietnam, has had plans to gradually provoke and widen the war of aggression." She had prefaced this by saying that

for the past few years, the Nixon Administration has unceasingly justified U.S. aggression and has tried by all means to change white into black about the origins of the war to oppose a correct solution to the South Vietnam problem. However, the recent publication in the New York TIMES of a secret U.S. Defense Department document is further proof of the U.S. Administration's lies during the past decades.

DRV press spokesman Nguyen Thanh Le at his press briefing on the session indicated that some passages in Xuan Thuy's prepared statement apparently had been intended as an allusion to the controversy over the Pentagon study. Le reported that after Ambassador Bruce made his "additional remarks"--in which he responded to Mme. Binh's remarks on the New York TIMES

STAT

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

23 JUNE 1971

STAT

- 6 -

publications by saying that there was no profit in debating the origins of the war--Xuan Thuy reread passages in his prepared statement that "from the beginning of this conference we have pointed out that the U.S. aggression over the past decades was the root and immediate cause of the present serious situation in Vietnam and Indochina . . ." and that "the Nixon Administration has done its best to deceive public opinion" (These passages were not included in the VNA account of the session, however.)

When Le was asked whether he thought the Pentagon report as published by the New York TIMES proved U.S. violation of the Geneva agreements, he responded by observing that the delegation had copies for the reporters of a DRV White Book issued in 1965.* In detailing the "stages" of U.S. intervention, Le said the fifth stage began with President Nixon's assumption of office; Le said that "Nixon has prolonged the aggression" and that in attempting to stop the New York TIMES from publishing the rest of the Pentagon report "he tried to conceal the fact that he has directly participated in and stepped up the war of aggression in Vietnam during the last decades."

MOSCOW CARRIES EXTENSIVE COMMENT ON U.S. DOCUMENTS "SCANDAL"

Moscow propaganda on publication of portions of the Pentagon study includes signed press articles--Ratiani in PRAVDA and Matveyev in IZVESTIYA--as well as voluminous TASS reportage of developments and radio comment.** Summaries and extracts of the documents themselves have been carried in PRAVDA and by TASS and Radio Moscow. Reporting continuing developments in the case, TASS covers the temporary restraining orders imposed on both the New York TIMES and the Washington POST and the FBI's search for the source of the "leak."

* VNA on 16 July 1965 transmitted an English text of the White Book which was dated May 1965.

** Moscow Radio devotes seven percent of its total weekly propaganda comment this week to Indochina, and five of the seven percent is on the Pentagon documents.

CONFIDENTIAL

STAT

STAT